

ORAL HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

INTERVIEW WITH: KAY DREY

INTERVIEW BY: KENN THOMAS

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THOMAS: Today is September 23, 1983. I'm Kenn Thomas with the oral history project of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at UMSL and I have with me today Kay Drey, one of the...were you one of the founders of County Open Housing?

DREY: Yes.

THOMAS: Why don't we just start at the beginning. I have here my earliest notes from the collection...it's from 1969 actually -- as soon as I find it -- you gave a presentation to the Urban League concerning the establishment of a housing office to provide services to minority families. Does your involvement in housing and integration go back before that?

DREY: Yes, it does. Actually my work, my interest in integration goes back to when I was seventeen years old, about 1950, but I had worked in housing with the Urban League and with Freedom of Residence I think before that, trying to open up housing opportunities for minorities and here in University City I tried to help minority families move into University City initially before there were any. I can't date that exactly, but....

THOMAS: And the County Open Housing group actually began in 1970, is that correct?

DREY: That may be right, yeah, and as I said before that I did work with the Urban League. Their program was called Operation Equality, I think it was.

THOMAS: I think that was in '69.

DREY: And at that, I had volunteers working with me. We tried to set up lists of apartment complexes that were available and houses, you know. And before that at Freedom of Residence, I put out a flier I guess called Homes on the Open Market, tried to.... actually at this point this was before Martin Luther King's assassination and therefore it was before there was a fair housing law in this country and we would literally phone people and ask if they would be willing to show their houses on the open market and we tried to give information about housing opportunities.

THOMAS: This was Freedom of Residence, or was it another group?

DREY: Freedom of Residence is another group and the Urban League is separate from them. Freedom of Residence still exists. It was formed by a woman named Ruth Peter.

THOMAS: Then County Housing was established in '70 by members of the Concordia Seminary Social Concerns Committee. Who was involved and how did the group start and how was it different from what was going on?

DREY: Well, I guess what happened is that, my feeling or my interest all along was sort of to try to keep schools, school districts integrated and what happened when University City, you know, first opened up or minority families were first given access to housing in University City.

THOMAS: Which was?

DREY: I'm sorry, I cannot remember. I don't remember, I mean I could figure it out. I know when my daughter, who is now twenty-six, was in kindergarten, there already was, you know, a black child in her class and maybe that was one of the very first families in University City, so I don't know exactly how to date that. But there was a mass, sort of a mass exodus out of University City at one point, but prior to that the...my feeling was that the main thing was to have the school districts in St. Louis county open

to minority families and my hope, too, was that University City wouldn't become desegregated, that just to have reshaped the ghetto wasn't much of a solution. So I worked initially through Freedom of Residence and a lot of times, it seems to me that civil rights groups would sort of take on easy victories. There in Freedom of Residence they were more interested in seeing if they could help every minority family interested in moving into say, University City or south St. Louis be able to do that, whereas taking on white suburbia where there were totally white schools, they were, they seemed reluctant to do that. And so I at first tried to, as I said, work through Freedom of Residence and then worked through the Urban League and I guess I felt there should really be an organization where minority families could come and have sort of almost escort service help because that's what it took and I happened to meet some people at Concordia Seminary, students who were interested in doing something and were interested in this. Also at that time I guess I met, there were some former Concordia people who got into the Black Jack project as well.

THOMAS: And who were the other people involved?

DREY: Well, the prime person at Concordia was John Gugel. He was a student, G-U-G-E-L, and then there were faculty people too. There was a young man named Paul Mittelstadt. I don't remember if he was actually....

THOMAS: Paul?

DREY: M-I-T-T-E-L-S-T-A-D-T. And there was a Professor Kline and I'm just really bad on names. I'm sorry I can't remember the other people.

THOMAS: And the group began in, was it late 1970?

DREY: Late 1960's, about then I think.

THOMAS: And early '70's?

DREY: Yeah, early in 1970 right, and we were given a room over at Concordia

Seminary, and the students volunteered and what we really did was first find out what housing was available and then those students would, what I said is that they'd use their white voices on the telephone to find out what was available and that's what it took. It took all kinds of tricks.

THOMAS: You maintained a list of housing that was available and made that list available to black families. How did you do that?

DREY: Well, we published them and in a lot of cases, the black families who came to us were, you know, mostly by word of mouth. People who objected to being steered into just at that time, University City and Normandy school districts and were willing, you know, maybe wanted to live closer to where they were working or something like that and so we got lists made by both driving through neighborhoods or by the newspaper and kept track of them and the minority families who came to us would tell us what kinds of housing the person was looking for and we would phone and find out let's say if an apartment was available and as I said, it took a lot of tricks, we had a separate telephone with a fake phone number. I mean an unlisted phone number and we would keep track of who we were supposedly were phoning for and what kind of unit and what our fake name was and then somebody might call back and we had sort of a list of lies right by the phone. I figure it took us almost 40 hours a family to get housing.

THOMAS: At that time the University City and Normandy areas were being integrated already?

DREY: Already were being integrated.

THOMAS: And the whole idea of the group was to get other areas to start the same process?

DREY: Right, right.

THOMAS: And it wasn't until '72 that another group threatened some legal action that it had to be changed, but the earliest mention I have of the University City Residential Service is from '74. So could you straighten that out. What was the University City Residential Service? How was it related to County Open Housing?

DREY: Well, the University City Residential Service was strictly to deal with housing in University City and we did sort of the same thing. We kept track of the housing and there primarily we were trying to encourage white families to continue moving into the University City school district.

THOMAS: And when was that service stopped?

DREY: I think it was maybe in 1968, but I'm not sure about that. I think maybe it was earlier than that. What in that case again things were both sort of two sides of the same vein. In an effort to combat what the real estate industry was doing, they were steering blacks only into University City and Normandy and they were steering whites away. Anytime a white family was interested in buying a house or renting an apartment they would only be shown housing in U. City or Normandy so the University City Residential Service, which still exists, was a effort for residents of the community to say as volunteers, mostly, initially, we live in the community, it's a good community, the schools are good and, you know, to give that kind of support and with the County Open Housing we were saying to black people that, you know, I guess the effort was to try to combat not just the real estate industry in St. Louis, but just all over the country there was a new effort to say anytime a black family moved into a white area there would be crosses burned on the front lawn and that's just not true. It took me years to get an article on which we finally did get on page one in the Globe-Democrat saying, giving some ex-

periences of the minority families with whom County Open Housing had worked and you know had moved into white neighborhoods and were totally accepted. You know one of the young families' mothers was quoted as saying that her child had been invited to so many birthday parties that she, she can't, you know can't afford it. Another person was interviewed, a young black man who had moved into another white neighborhood in Florissant was asked to be the President of the PTA of the grade school and so, you know, it's very hard to get the message out that integration does work, that neighborhood integration can be successful.

THOMAS: Is there, was there another side to that coin? Were there a lot of problems in County Open Housing?

DREY: I never personally had any regrets expressed to me by anyone who moved into an apartment or house. I had a whole lot of problems working with people getting them in, you know, and there were times they would sort of be reluctant because maybe the landlord had been unpleasant or something like that, but once the lease was signed or the contract was signed and the real estate person realized that he had no out, you know, then it was a whole different story and I really never personally never had...I never heard anyone complain.

THOMAS: Well, the Black Jack situation then arose in well, beginning in the early '70's. What was your involvement with that? And the group's involvement?

DREY: Well, actually I personally was involved. We helped put up some money, I think we lent some money for the project, anonymously.

THOMAS: For the, with the Parkview Heights?

DREY: Right through that, right. Through that or ecumenical housing or whatever it was called and at that, and when that project initially was suggested, I, they wanted to build some subsidized housing and I think at one point the people interested were thinking in terms of the city of St. Louis and I urged them to look into the county. I really had hoped that they would have looked into the central west portion of the county, the Parkway school dis-

trict which was where wealthier, more highly educated white families were living and I felt, you know, why not take advantage of those many parents who were volunteering in libraries and stuff to, you know, move out there and that's also where the jobs, a lot of jobs were being relocated. At any rate they did buy land was in, what was in the then unincorporated north county.

THOMAS: And then, then it was a scramble to get in incorporated?

DREY: Immediately, that's right, immediately. At first they immediately got it incorporated and I, again as so often, I was on the opposite side of Larry Roos who was the county supervisor at the time, and the county council and there, too, he was on the wrong side. He encouraged them, you know, let them go ahead and get incorporated, and of course the first thing they did, like the next day, was to pass a zoning ordinance that rezoned the property from multi-family to single family and, of course, that started litigation that the U.S. Supreme Court, I mean the U.S. Justice Department spent a million dollars on that case and won.

THOMAS: What was the... how was the group, the County Open Housing group, which was essentially just a listing service, how was that involved, or was it?

DREY: Really the group wasn't involved except that we had a newsletter that, you know, we tried to keep people informed on what was going on in open housing efforts and so only in that way did we involve the recipients on the newsletters and so forth just keeping them up. County Open Housing, though we did also participate in efforts to bread down the exclusionary zoning in St. Louis, unincorporated St. Louis County, and this was a case where we just through educational letters to the editor and so forth. We participated in that way.

THOMAS: And that... I was going to go over the basics of how that, the Black Jack case. Maybe you'll be able to illuminate some of the things that I've read about it. It eventually was decided on the behalf of Parkview and everybody that was trying to get it up there, but the building never went up because of costs.

DREY: I'm not sure, but I think it's been built now.

THOMAS: Has it?

DREY: I'm a little confused. I think there has been some subsidized housing. Maybe it's not built on that same site, Parker Road and whatever, but I'm not sure. I sort of think something was being built because I do remember hearing that there were, there was some, sounded like arson at one point, but I'm talking about just a few years ago now. So I'm not real sure what happened.

THOMAS: That's interesting.

DREY: It was built by the Parkview Heights Corporation or whatever it was called, so you know, they succeeded in delaying it, but I sort of think there was a, what, the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing had another, had another litigation going at the same time. Somehow I think that some subsidized housing did get built. I'm sorry to be vague on that. You might want to talk to the mayor of Black Jack or someone or Paul Mittlestadt would know, by the way. He still lives in St. Louis. He'd be the person best to talk to or Jack Quigley who also lives in St. Louis.

THOMAS: Jack Quigley?

DREY: Right. I guess he may be, he does pastoral counseling and he may be a minister. I'm not sure and Paul Middlestadt is in real estate and I think Paul may also be a minister. I'm not sure. It's been so long.

THOMAS: In '73 the director, the St. Louis director of HUD sent a letter to the East-West Gateway Co-ordinating Council that was critical of their refusal

to take a stand on things like Black Jack and flood plain development and housing in general. There is material on this in your collection and I was wondering if there was something there you could maybe tell me about.

DREY: Well, I just, let's see, was that Johnny Bullock, was that his last name, do you know?

THOMAS: I'm sorry, the name?

DREY: Bullock, Johnny Bullock was the head of HUD at that time. Oh was that nationally or was it?

THOMAS: Well it was the St. Louis director. What happened was the letter was later rescinded and there was another one submitted.

DREY: Oh I see. I don't remember that directly. I know I've been interested in flood plain developemnt as well and there was an interesting sort of side issue that happened with Earth City. I don't know if that, if whether you found any of that information, but Earth City is a flood plain new town-in-town. It was going to be housing and industrial development on the flood plain of the Missouri River and a man named John Brawley who was mayor of Ferguson at the time...

THOMAS: Could you spell that?

DREY: B-R-A-W-L-E-Y, John Brawley who's just a wonderful man and who was mayor repeatedly of Ferguson and he was head of the St. Louis County Planning Commission at the time that Black, -- that the Earth City question came up whether or not to develop land on the flood plain - 90 feet deep top soil and with John's leadership I think they did agree to let that land be developed which was a real tragedy, a real loss.

THOMAS: When did that begin?

DREY: I don't know. I think that the ordinance maybe was passed around

1968, but I'm not sure about that. I have that whole file that I can give you too, on Earth City, but that ordinance is really very special because they said that any housing units that would be developed, one third of those units would have to be for subsidized families or individuals which is unique probably in this country. Certainly there were very few cases like that and actually they have yet to build unit one of any housing out there, but they've been doing, you know, have been building mostly warehouses. Again, there too Larry Roos was on the wrong side. I used to say when he retired as county supervisor that I could retire - it didn't work that way, but.... So it could be that you know, that that correspondence, maybe I had it, you know, kept it because of the flood plain developemnt questions but also, I guess I don't remember specifically about that. We did try, there was a man named Johnny Bullock who was head of HUD here locally for a while.

THOMAS: I'm sorry, the name?

DREY: B-U-L-L-O-C-K, Johnny Bullock and he, you know, and he did speak out a little bit, but mostly people were really trying to keep the status quo, keep you know, my interest has always been to try to build units scattered throughout St. Louis county that people of all socioeconomic backgrounds would be able to afford. And mostly the real estate people have been, or the developers and so forth have been interested in keeping large lot zoning where it is presently, you know, to keep economic groups segregated, and of course, if you have economic segregation you have racial segregation.

THOMAS: In March of '73 the East-West Gateway Co-ordinating Council proposed a regional housing plan that included building about 10,000 low income units in Valley Park, Kirkwood, Meacham Park, University City and Normandy school districts and in those areas that are, as we've already discussed, that were already too willing to accept this kind of thing. Do you recall

that plan or how they worked out and that's basically the same thing as what you were working on.

DREY: That was probably dropped is my guess. East-West never really rocked the boat.

THOMAS: No, there was a plan that was submitted by some academics... maybe the Metropolitan Center at the University, Jim Lowry, do you know that name?

DREY: Yes, I know the name, yeah.

THOMAS: And that, that plan was basically a scattered site, kind of a thing, but...

DREY: But going where there were already minority families as in the case of Valley Park, it's, the whole town's mostly built on a flood plain, it's a tremendous amount of flooding there so it is marginally, marginal land, but Meacham Park of course was a black enclave and Normandy and really St. Louis county has yet to build subsidized units for families, you know they've built some subsidized, I mean you know, they got credit to build, they could have built some subsidized units in St. Louis County for families, but they managed, you know, sort of to, you know, get around that. I think maybe they built some in Elmwood Park, which is right next to Olivette. They built maybe 24 units in all. You know, they just barely, just really units that they tore down were replaced on the small percent of the ones they tore down, so the county really never did what it should have done, what it was supposed to do under Federal law - if we were getting funding we were supposed to provide a certain number of units and the county managed to let that law go by the way.

THOMAS: And did County Open Housing have anything to do with the subsidized housing units? Did they try to find families...?

DREY: We tried, we tried to work with families who were, you know, looking for units that would have qualified economically, but those units, the few units that were in St. Louis county, you know, had long waiting lists, but

you know, only in efforts to... I would talk with people in the County Housing Authority, you know, whenever possible and would try and, you know, see what they were doing to take advantage of their units that they were allowed to... could have built, but you know, we did just try to keep track of any housing that was available.

THOMAS: In May of '73 Maxine Marberry was hired as a housing rights counselor. Did County Open Housing have a housing rights counselor before that and what was the function of that?

DREY: Well, she was really like our paid staff person and I don't remember whether she... I don't think she was the first paid staff person, but that was what we called her. We, maybe, I don't remember if we paid some of the students part-time or anything.

THOMAS: But housing rights counselor basically performed the functions of the office?

DREY: Right.

THOMAS: Nothing more than that?

DREY: Right.

THOMAS: OK, how large was your staff?

DREY: Pretty small, but it was pretty wonderful being located at Concordia Seminary. There were, there was a group really - neat students who felt very strongly that there should be equal access to housing and they volunteered and so you know we had a lot of volunteers who came in on a regular basis.

THOMAS: This is a side issue that's also included in the papers concerning an abortion clinic, this was in '74 - The Ladies Center, which you took a stand against. Do you remember that?

DREY: That probably was that you have it in, you know, but yes I did take a stand against that which was unusual for me because I believe that a woman should have the opportunity for an abortion if that's what she chooses, so I've been for legalized abortion for many, many years. But in this case I was

opposed to it for several reasons. I had been on the board of Planned Parenthood before that time but I was concerned about locating it where it was in University City, where it is now, actually because it is not near a hospital and I was also concerned that they had not really leveled with the city council at the time here in University City because they claimed they would have full time ambulance, ambulances, and they didn't, you know, so I worried that they were being deceptive about that, whether it was a good operation.

THOMAS: I think you also put up some kind of resistance about their testing, their pregnancy testing procedures.

DREY: That may be.

THOMAS: And also there was a... a, and you were worried about backlash from a seventeen cent tax hike for the schools.

DREY: Right.

THOMAS: And on the other side of the question was Harriet Woods, I think.

DREY: She was on the City Council probably at that time. Yeah, there were... it's, the location was very near the grade school and a lot of people were very concerned about that. And that's a case of where you've a, I do, I guess at times do things for political reasons, and that is certainly a case where I did that.

THOMAS: In, that's not really a bother to me. County Open Housing in '70, again in '73, the County Housing Authority implemented a development plan to improve conditions in Meacham Park. Do you recall that?

DREY: No. We did what to the plan?

THOMAS: Well, it was the County Housing Authority had a plan that was supposed to develop the area, the deteriorating areas of Meacham Park.

DREY: I guess they did. I think they have built their, you know... That

was in, that's a small, also was a small enclave of black housing - housing for black, you know where black people were living and it was very sub-standard and I guess they tore some down and re-built new and that was in the Kirkwood school district and I guess.... I think Webster earlier, I mean quite a bit earlier before I was involved at all in housing, was, had I think torn down some housing where blacks were living and never replaced it and because of that experience Louis Green, who is an attorney who was living in Kirkwood at that time, he wanted to make sure that Kirkwood was involved in tearing down any housing if any housing was being torn down there, that the families dispossessed were given the opportunity to relocate in the same area and that Webster did just the opposite, actually got the families evicted in essence. And we have a case going on right now in the city of St. Louis where they are talking about... they've moved some families out to near the Washington University Medical School and they've not given them substitute housing in that area, and that now is really against the law because of work Lou Green did in Kirkwood. And in Meacham Park, in the case you are talking about there, they did try to provide housing for people who were there at the time, so the government could not be responsible for moving people out, you know, like in Urban Renewal. They used to call it Negro Removal. That's not supposed to happen anymore by government action that you could somehow disposs people.

THOMAS: And when did Louis Green's work... ?

DREY: It would have been before all this...

THOMAS: That's a...

DREY: Louis, Louis Green and that - he would be able to talk to you about that.

THOMAS: Well, that brings to mind this other note I have about a woman named Elnora Bagbey who was a maintenance worker at Nooney Corporation and she was being dislocated because of, and she had been in this house for 8 years and she was, you know, she made all the payments in Pantheon, this is in

Lafayette town, this - Pantheon and they dislocated her. Do you recall that?

DREY: I certainly do. That was not all that long ago. And there was this really neat white woman who was active with her church somewhere out in west county who somehow got my name and she'd called me like ninety times, it seemed to me, a day and we'd discuss what she should do next and she, she just stayed with Mrs. Bagbey and I...

THOMAS: Who was this woman?

DREY: Pardon?

THOMAS: What was her name?

DREY: I can't remember her name, I'm sorry, but her church had sort of adopted either a neighborhood or another church or something in the inner city and this particular woman who had called me had been very, very persistent and resourceful and Mrs. Bagbey had this wonderful federal loan to buy the house that had, you know, a subsidized loan, which she was going to lose. And if I remember Leon Strauss was going to give her, like, I can't remember, like a thousand dollars. Well, for a woman with - what is it - eight children or something, it was astronomical...

THOMAS: (mutter)

DREY: Pardon?

THOMAS: She did have a large family.

DREY: She had a lot of kids and there was no way she could have found alternative housing. So we found, we finally, if I remember correctly, ended up, she moved into, I think, a two family building and turned it into a single family dwelling for her. And I think we made Pantheon provide her, you know, with the building or something and maybe some funds, because otherwise she would have been out on the street.

THOMAS: Are you familiar with anything, any other, well I'm sure there are probably any number of examples of Pantheon being involved with dislocating blacks or in various projects.

DREY: I would think that's happened.

THOMAS: But you haven't had involvement with that?

DREY: No, because that was really, already by this time I was supposedly working full time fighting nuclear power. I mean, as it happens, it's nine years ago this November 13th that I made my first public speech on nuclear power, so that was in 1974, so I really sort of moved out of civil rights and into...

THOMAS: As early as 1974?

DREY: '74. It was the day that Karen Silkwood was run off the road that I made my first public speech. So I still worked on civil rights off and on but I gradually, certainly by 1976 my efforts in civil rights were really reduced, unfortunately, because it's the field I feel emotionally strongest about.

THOMAS: In 1975 the... there was a real complicated controversy surrounding Malcolm Terrace.

DREY: Right.

THOMAS: I have a page and a half of notes trying to straighten it all out and I was wondering if you would be able to... to...

DREY: That was another case. I'm very embarrassed to give you all my papers to show you where I've been meddling over the years. People say what do you do with your time and I say I'm a professional meddler. That was another case where, this was not a case of blacks, but it was a case of socioeconomic, an effort to get rid of low and moderate income families from the middle of Creve Couer. And Malcolm Terrace is just a wonderful little community that no one can believe is there. If I remember correctly there were at the time I got involved, maybe only 25 housing units left, I'm not sure, modest homes.

And Creve Couer had sort of had passed a new law saying that there could not be any housing units on land less than an acre, maybe, or something like one house per acre, or one house per three acres. I don't remember what it was.

THOMAS: Area of zone for one acre lots?

DREY: One acre lots. Well, here was Malcolm Terrace which was within the city boundary, had 25 square feet.

THOMAS: 2500.

DREY: 2500

THOMAS: Square feet.

DREY: Square foot lots. And so I think maybe when the new housing law ordinance was passed, or whatever they, there was a grandfather clause supposedly protecting the Malcolm Terrace unit. I'm not sure.

THOMAS: What is a grandfather clause?

DREY: That would mean that as of the date of the ordinance was passed, from then on there would have to be one acre minimum, but prior to that there shouldn't have been, you know, there should have been whatever... because otherwise it is a matter of like, taking a person's property, which is not allowed under the U.S. constitution without just compensation so they were... I was hoping at one point to be able to take the... I wanted the Malcolm Terrace land to be developed, you know, with multi-family units. It could have been, or at least to use all the land there the way it was... the way it had been platted, but, and we ended up just trying at least to reserve those lots on which there was already a house existing and we did do that.

THOMAS: And the city of Creve Couer was trying to buy...

DREY: They wanted to condemn all the houses and turn it into a park because they didn't want these families there, they were, they were an embarrassment to the city because they weren't fancy.

THOMAS: I believe the mayor said that he personally did not want any colored people living there.

DREY: Yeah, that's right. That's when we were trying to build new units. I think, yeah, he did say that. Creve Couer has an incredible history. They did that where they tried to get rid of, in his, in Harold Dielman's case, I guess he was probably mayor at the time and I think he ran for something like governor of Missouri or something. I can't remember, maybe he ran for St. Louis County Supervisor. I don't remember, but at any rate U.S. Congress. I don't know what he ran for. But Dielman, you know, he didn't want black people living there, but the city of Creve Couer had in essence tried to get rid of low and moderate income white families, you know, this was socioeconomic prejudice. They also had an incredible case where, I don't know if I had any files on that, where they, where Dr. Venabull was building a house in an all, it was going to be perhaps an all black little subdivision. And Creve Couer in that case condemned that subdivision and turned Dr. Venabull's house into a park and it's a park to this day. It's called Beirne Park, and it's just... I went out there once.

THOMAS: How do you spell Beirne?

DREY: B-E-I-R-N-E. I believe it was for a mayor. What a name of a... I mean, I'm thinking...

THOMAS: They actually threw this doctor out?

DREY: He was not allowed, right, they wouldn't, they wouldn't even let the builder... and if the builder was Doc... Joe Vatterott I believe.

THOMAS: How do you spell that?

DREY: V-A-T-T-E-R-O-T-T, I think, or something like that. Vatterott was very strong in this case. I mean I think he, his very commendable efforts

that he made and I believe the builders were not even allowed to take water to the site, which you need for laying bricks and stuff and the house was, you know, like almost completely built and then this was all taken to court and Dr. Venabull lost and I went out there one time. The first time I saw it I just couldn't believe it. Here is, you drive into a subdivision which is now developed with white homeowners, fancy houses and here you'll come across a subdivision house with an American flag in the front yard and now they have tennis courts, a few tennis courts and stuff, but otherwise you wouldn't even know it was there, you wouldn't know that it was different from any of the other houses there and I knocked on the door and a man, an older man came to the door who was apparently the caretaker and looking inside I saw some, you know, like folding chairs because they must have meetings in there or something and I said is this a park and he said yes, and I said how come this house is a park and I said why did Creve Couer buy this house and make it into a park and he said to keep the coloreds out.

THOMAS: When was this?

DREY: Oh, I don't know. It would have been around 1970 that I would have gone down there, or something like that. So he knew and it's been written up in, you know, nationwide, it's well known so Creve Couer did that. And then a third thing that Creve Couer has on its record is that they tried to keep Temple Israel out, which is a Jewish temple. They lost a court decision on that. So here they have socioeconomic racial and religious bigotry. Interestingly enough there are a lot of the whites who fled from University City because they didn't want to live in an integrated neighborhood, moved down to Creve Couer, so a lot of Jewish families had fled.

THOMAS: So how did that all turn out? Did the mayor also try to claim that the... that they denied, well, they had denied that the people living in the Malcolm Terrace building permits, or a.....

DREY: Yes, that's right. Some of the families there had wanted to enlarge their homes and fix them up and they were never able to get a building permit 'cause the city was trying to pretend there wasn't, you know, these weren't viable lots so now... we, we won that battle. At least the families are still there and those units, those plots of land are still buildable lots. There was a wonderful woman named Eunice... I'm not even sure, Eunice was her first name, and she really, really worked hard... I can give you her name. I have it upstairs. That's terrible. I can't remember. Eckstein, but I'm not sure.

THOMAS: What's that?

DREY: Eckstein, Phyllis Eckstein.

THOMAS: Phyllis, are you sure?

DREY: I'm not sure. I think it's Phyllis.

THOMAS: Spell that.

DREY: E-C-K-S-T-E-I-N, Eckstein. Just a wonderful woman who worked very hard. And there was another thing that was kind of fun was somehow we interested a reporter at the Post-Dispatch who was from Nigeria initially, and he even spoke at a city council meeting in Creve Couer which I'm sure that if the Post-Dispatch knew that he, he.... he was a black guy who was just wonderful, has gone back to Nigeria so... excuse me.

DREY: There's something called the Midwest Regional Compact and Missouri would join with all the other states in the midwest. One state would be chosen to host all the radioactive waste for the midwest region.

THOMAS: Oh.

DREY: Missouri legislature is dumb enough to say let's do it because it would make us a lot of money. I have an editorial downstairs from Calloway County

saying... it was entitled A Lucrative Business and it said it would be a way to make money and it said... talked about a permanent business, you know, this would be it. It would be depression proof even this is, you know, it would keep going.

THOMAS: Oh, you mean that you could make money off it?

DREY: Forever.

THOMAS: Being a dump sight?

DREY: Uh huh. Forever, since this stuff is forever and you could keep bringing this stuff in.

THOMAS: I don't understand how this makes money though.

DREY: It does, it charges... it's a billion dollar business. Hazardous waste dumps.

THOMAS: Just for the maintenance of the...?

DREY: And charging for every cubic meter.

THOMAS: And charging for storage.

THOMAS: Oh, boy! Great!

DREY: The Missouri legislature would, would do that and I thank you. Are you really not coming back because I called you by the wrong name. I have one on Monday_____ typed.

THOMAS: Boy, that's great. I wish I could get people to work for me like that. I think we were talking about Malcolm Terrace. Was there anything else you wanted to add about that?

DREY: It is Phyllis Eckstein by the way. Well I just, I think that the whole business of discrimination is not just racial, but socioeconomic and I felt for instance here in University City when people moved away, and a lot of... they were never asked are you moving away because... I mean, when they

are asked why are you moving away they would sometimes say well I'm afraid the schools won't be good now that there are blacks in them. You know they talk about their concerns for schools, they talk about safety and so forth, but I think that the status is a very important reason why people have moved away. They sort of think well if black families can afford to send their kids to University High School it's not a very toney high school - it's not a fancy high school and so in the case of, you know, Creve Couer, of course, that was a blatant effort to get rid of people with modest means.

THOMAS: How was County Open Housing funded?

DREY: I don't know. It's possible my husband might have remembered some times that were bad. I'm not very good at raising money. I sort of think that's possible that we, you know, it was a very modest operation as well. If I remember correctly, Concordia Seminary charged us, you know, like virtually nothing, if anything, for the room and then when we moved to ^{Denville} Demand... I just don't remember about the funding. I'm sorry.

THOMAS: Well, some of the initial funding was from the Martin Luther King fund and Keys for Christ Foundation.

DREY: Right!

THOMAS: That was sustain. You had mostly volunteer workers and one paid staff.

DREY: Right, that was normally... but we did have printing and stuff, and I think maybe therefor Concordia helped. I'm sorry. I've forgotten about the... I'm just not good on the funding question.

THOMAS: In, in November of 1974, at 5:00 in the morning you wrote a letter to a woman... I couldn't even pronounce her name, Cathy U-I-T-T-I and two board members about... It's a long letter describing your potanic feelings

and thoughts on integration, and a copy of the letter also went to someone or another letter, a similar letter was written to someone named Anita and I was wondering what prompted that and what was going on.

DREY: I don't remember who the Cathy was.

THOMAS: Cathy Uitti.

DREY: I don't remember, unless... you know...

THOMAS: She... there's also a note in there later than... after this letter was written where she suggested that you resign from the board of directors because you had used your money to control and harrass the office of County Open Housing.

DREY: I had done that?

THOMAS: Yes, that's what was down here.

DREY: I don't remember, as I said, I don't even remember who she was, but Anita Declue...

THOMAS: D-E-C-L-U-E.

DREY: Right, was on the board. Her husband, Jim Declue has been in the St. Louis media a lot because he was head of the National, NAACP, when it got involved in the St. Louis city school desegregation issue. He has since been deposed, he is no longer head of the NAACP, but Anita Declue... I was on her board of directors in County Open Housing and she and Jim, her husband, rented a house that Leo and I bought in the Ladue school district. They were our first tennants. We, we bought some houses in University City to rent to white people and we bought a couple of houses in the Clayton and Ladue school districts to rent to minority people and in both cases people who would not maybe have had the courage to buy or the financial ^{would have had} ~~were with~~ all to buy in, you know, the particular neighborhood and Anita and Jim Declue rented from us in Olivette, which is how I got to meet her in Ladue school district.

And the thing that's ironic about the Declue family is that they had a son who attended the Ladue public schools as a black student and whenever I tried to work to, toward helping minority families to move into the Ladue school district or worked toward, you know, trying to get multi-family units built in Olivette or something like that, it seemed to me as if Anita Declue would, really wasn't interested in opening up housing for minorities in the Ladue school district. But I don't know, we really got at logger head's at some point and, you know, I guess, I don't know, I think she's bigotted against lower income people. That's all I can say. You know I always thought it was interesting that Jim Declue was so interested in opening, in, in breaking down segregation in the St. Louis city schools, but, you know, as far as his own child was concerned, he had his child in an all wealthy school district - Ladue.

THOMAS: Do you remember the specifics of this correspondence?

DREY: I certainly... I don't... I remember that there was... you know... I don't remember the specifics at all. I remember that it was, you know, that it was very hot and heavy. She just hated me - Anita.

THOMAS: But, she was involved with County Open Housing?

DREY: She was on our board and it may be that I... I ultimately got off the board because there was a question I felt that we should be only working in the areas that were not predominately white, which would mean we would not list housing in University City or Normandy or the city of St. Louis. And I know that that was ultimately how the board split up and John Goodle I think got off the board at that time also. Unless he had already moved away. I can't remember. Sorry.

THOMAS: This was... this was moving into '76 and '77.

DREY: So this fight was before then I see.

THOMAS: This was '74, yeah. I think... it might be related though I believe that the discussions that led to what eventually arrived. In '76 the goals

and policies committee was established that was able to either reaffirm what County Open Housing stood for or redefine its goals. And so apparently there was some kind of division going on for leadership there and I was wondering if you could say a few words about that.

DREY: I don't remember. I just know my own personal feelings about what was needed and probably still is needed to this day is, is to if... my feeling is if there were minority families and lower income families living all over St. Louis county there would be no place that people with economic options could flee. And once people start living together then I think, and only then, will the barriers of communication and so forth break down. And so I sort of believe that the end justifies the means as long as you don't hurt anybody. And I guess I've been accused of being a manipulator and I guess it's because I believe very, very strongly in integration and it takes manipulation, unfortunately, to get around what the clever white and black real estate people are able to do.

THOMAS: Pete ^{Persol}~~Burndt~~ was hired as housing rights advocate which I presume is the same position...

DREY: Right, right.

THOMAS: That Maxine Murberry had. And he was hired in '76 concurrently here and I suppose if anybody represents what you might want to call the other end of the spectrum question, I guess it would be him. Did you have any.. How did you and Pete work together?

DREY: Very poorly. I came... I remember I was not on the committee that chose him, but you know, he had a PH. D. in sociology and his heart was in the right place and I remember the only concern I felt was that mostly County Open Housing was working with people who were economic - had some economic

stability. We could not work with minority families who were low income. We had to work only with minority families who had good credit and good jobs at least, you know, steady jobs, because there's no way to accuse a white landlord of not accepting a person because of his race if really that landlord is, has legitimate credit reasons for turning him down and so forth, so we had to work with people who had good credit and as I said, good jobs, stable jobs and so that, that leaves out obviously, low income families, families with lots of problems. And Pete ^{Burnett} ~~Burndt~~'s interest had always been, you know, with really the impoverished people and people with, you know, without housing period, and my only concern when we hired him was would he be willing to work with families... the kinds of families we were working with - basically middle class families, but black, and he said, you know, at the time we hired him he apparently said yes, he knew what our efforts were and the first board meeting, I came home, I remember saying this guy is going to... he's just wonderful, but by the second board meeting he was already... we were already at logger heads. He was beginning to say the important thing is to get housing for these people. It doesn't matter where it is and it does matter if the ghetto just reshapes itself and so forth, so we really didn't agree. I sort of had the same kinda falling out with him that I had with people earlier at Freedom of Residence, particularly Hedy Epsteinⁿ and a guy named Jim Sporleder.

THOMAS: How do you spell that, I'm sorry.

DREY: H-E-D-Y E-P-S-T-E-I-^NM and then Jim Sporleder. That's S-P-O-R-L-E-D-O-R. You know people... they were sort of interested in getting housing and they weren't as interested in the whole question of can you keep communities integrated. ✓ And my feeling is unless you can keep a community racially integrated then you are going to end up having... You know if you have only black people living in a community then it's also going to happen that you

are going to have mostly lower income families because upwardly mobile black people don't move into all black communities either. They don't send their kids to the public schools and if the goal is integration, you have to have socioeconomic integration and racial integration together.

THOMAS: The concept there, isn't that known as racial ^{typing} typing?

DREY: That's right. They used to talk about a tipping point, you know, in University City they used to say that as soon as University City becomes 30% black all the whites will flee and we showed that that didn't have to happen. We may be here at a point now in University City where we just may end up with all black schools, which is, it's really very sad, but I'm still hopeful. ✓

THOMAS: And ^{Burndt} Burndt's position on that would be that the area is becoming all black and that is not necessarily a bad thing.

DREY: That's right. Exactly and I... It's not, you know, it certainly doesn't matter, it's just that I think for one thing the tax base gets less, you know, gets smaller if you don't have middle income and upper income families, and the city services are reduced and all kinds of things happen, plus just the whole goal of having people live together and learn together, you know. We have lost that for another generation or two.

THOMAS: And how did all this, these divisions of philosophy, how did that play out in the end? Well you resigned in '77. Is that correct?

DREY: Yes.

THOMAS: How did that come about?

DREY: Well, I guess, I think what we did at that last meeting was maybe there was a vote. Should we list housing and work throughout the metropolitan area, including Normandy, U. City and the city, this is my recollection, or should we just work in predominately white school districts in the county, and I think by that time we had a bunch of, you know, a bunch...

we had some real estate people on our board who sort of, I guess, couldn't

even legally have voted for the kinds of steering that we were doing. I mean which was sort of illegal, just not showing people housing everywhere, just working in certain areas. But also I think there was, just was a philosophical difference. And the side I was on lost and I just did not want to be part of an organization that would accelerate what the real estate people wanted to have happening anyway, which was to have University City and Normandy house all the minority families in metropolitan St. Louis that wanted to get out of the city and I just didn't want to be a part of it, so I think I resigned probably the same night we voted.

THOMAS: In either '75 or '76 in a narrative for the United Way, you know they have narratives that describe member groups. It states specifically that County Open Housing did not... was not involved in low income, you know, finding housing for low income people and that it was more interested in getting middle income blacks the integration opportunities and it's curious to me to see that kind of a shift though, and how it comes about that County Open Housing began in the late '60's and early '70's with this wonderful philosophy and then eventually it's a gradual... is it a gradual process, or was it that Pete Burndt was charismatic kind that comes out?

DREY: Charismatic. Well, I guess Pete plus Anita and the real estate people on the board won out. Now, I think it's hard to be a part of the... it's hard to say the kinds of things I'm saying. Most people aren't comfortable saying these things that you have to manipulate people. I mean I still feel terribly guilty from... you know, I have one thing I've done in my life that I feel terribly guilty about is that we, my husband and I, had given some money to the Urban League to help open up housing for minority families in the county and for some reason the person responsible for that job, for that project at the Urban League found housing for a great big low income family in the Normandy school district. When I found out I said you know I didn't think it was the right way for these funds to be used because that would just

accelerate segregation in the Normandy school district and Carrie Bash who was, maybe still is, head of the Urban League...

THOMAS: Bash?

DREY: B-A-S-H, C-A-R-R-I-E, Carrie Bash, you know, she finally agreed with me and so this one man who was working with the Urban League had to go tell this large family, I think from East St. Louis, that they couldn't have this house. And I feel, you know, to this day, guilty about that. Here was a case where a human being was hurt because, you know, of my personal efforts at manipulation. You know, philosophically maybe it was right, but humanely it was wrong. In the long run you know, I just personally feel so strongly that you have to have integration or you end up having subsidized housing in ghettos, but, you know, I... the whole business of manipulation which was really what County Open Housing was doing is ^{anathema} ~~enanthemat~~ to some people.

You know, it's just lousy situation ethics. It's all kinds of things.

THOMAS: Legally, there are some gray areas to, after all, that is steering for a good cause.

DREY: Oh, absolutely, that's right, that's right. Legally it's wrong and you know, as I said too, as far as Pete ^{Rand} ~~Burndt~~ was concerned, he was more concerned with getting housing over people's heads, you know, and that's a legitimate, important, but I think short term goal. But it's an important goal, and, you know, you say about, you know, about gray areas. When I set up a thing called the University City Home Rental Trust, which I haven't given you files on yet, I'd probably go to jail if I would, and this is working... We bought 35 houses north of Olive in University City to rent to white families with children. We initially intended for them to have children attending the public schools in an effort to keep the schools, which were being integrated, segregated overnight, and we would try to keep them integrated, and I remember talking with Frank Schwelb who was head of the...

THOMAS: How do you spell that?

DREY: S-C-H-W-E-L-B, who was the one, who was the head of the civil rights part of the civil... of the U.S. Department of Justice. He did the Black Jack case for the U.S. Department of Justice. I told him about the Home Rental Trust operation and I said, and at that time, I think Freedom of Residence was threatening to take us, you know, to court, and I said Frank, what do you think about this where we bought houses we were only wanting to rent to whites in an area where there's resegregation going on? And he said it's clearly against the law. He said if you were taken to court, I would have to, you know, say that you should be taken to court, but I sure as heck would put it on the back burner. You know, it's one of those unpleasant things you have to do. Unfortunately, a citizen effort on a little tiny, tiny scale when you've got the whole real estate industry and the media against you.

THOMAS: Could you explain that a little more? I'm not quite clear about the trust fund.

DREY: We bought 35 houses north of Olive in University City and as I said, my husband and I, you know, tried to do the opposite, but we didn't, it wasn't as much fun to me. In the case of University City, we bought houses north of Olive in neighborhoods where literally white families moved out overnight. They panicked.

THOMAS: So you tried to....

DREY: And we tried to say that we still believe in this neighborhood and we wanted some of the whites that were still there to stay.

THOMAS? That's interesting. It reminds me of the whole issue with the abortion clinic where you're actually taking a position against... that really looks on the surface like it's a racist operation.

DREY: It is a racial operation.

THOMAS: Yeah! '

DREY: In fact no one knew about it until there's, there's a newspaper article, I think it's August 1, 1979, on page one of the Post-Dispatch. I have not phoned the Post-Dispatch news department since then. I've been mad at them, you know, ever since they wanted to write this up, a guy named Bill Freivogel who's now with the Post in Washington, D.C. And I said please don't write it up, it's 10 years old... there's no way you can say it without having it sound racist.

THOMAS: Oh, this, this had to be about those houses you bought back in...

DREY: We must have bought them, you know, like in '68, '69, '70, something like that and at the time it was, you know, it was extremely important. I still look on it as, I mean, we still own some of the houses, we've sold some of them to our tenants. A lot of the white families who moved into our houses, we've had some black families as well, and some Vietnamese families, a few of them now, actually but a lot of the white families who lived in those houses have since bought in University City, so we've demonstrated that, you know, integration can work, but, you know, I said to Bill Freivogel please don't run this article. It's, it's... I don't even like black people to have to know how much it takes for people to, you know, be able to live, be willing to live and go to school with minority people. I think, you know, I'm... I think it's just incredible, that all these games have to be played and I said please don't write about this. There's no way you can do it right. He... I wouldn't give him any information. He went sort of door to door. He did everything but getting permission from me, and wrote it. I said at last if you're going to... then I called the city editor and I said Bill Freivogel was working on a story and would you please give me 24 hours notice before you run it. If you're going to run it, I want to talk to the managing editor. I'll talk to Joe Pulitzer and try to explain, explain why I don't want it written. That day I remember someone called me at noon and said have

you seen page one of the Post-Dispatch. The article with my picture, was in there and I called Dick Wild and I said I thought you were going to give me 24 hours notice. He said I tried to reach you yesterday. I told him I was home all day yesterday, and I said this is a 10 year old story. Why did you have to tun it? But I sent a note to Joe Pulitzer, I'll be giving you all that stuff sometime, you know, saying that the media had been... for whatever reason, I think they don't like to see that integration can work, whether it's their own prejudices, if it's because, you know, the case of University City. Some of these people working for a liberal newspaper are ashamed that they're not a part of this effort or what it is, but I think the media have... I think being black in this country must be the most god-awful thing in the world because of the media.

THOMAS: How do you spell Freivogel?

DREY: F-R-E-I-V-O-G-E-L.

THOMAS: Have you maintained, well, I'm sure you have, maintained an interest in housing and the problems of integration? What are the current concerns? What are your current concerns?

DREY: Well, I still feel that, that if we're going to have racial integration, we have to have socioeconomic integration. We have to have housing units that minority families can afford and that hasn't happened yet. Now I think this whole business with this bussing has just made a tremendous difference as far as, at least children all over St. Louis county are going to school where they may see a few black children and I certainly think that's wonderful, but because so many jobs are out in the suburbs now, I think there should be housing opportunities for people of all backgrounds. I don't see it working anywhere in the country.

THOMAS: What do you think about the desegregation plan in general?

DREY: Well, I think it's fine. I think the whole mess we've got here in University City, you know, which isn't involved in that, was again, I think, because of the media irresponsibility here last year dipping attention to Sterling Dands.

THOMAS: I'm not familiar with him.

DREY: Well, University City... wait just a minute, I just think that, well last year there was a whole bunch of stuff in the paper about University City schools. People were unhappy with the schools, and black people, a few black people here were saying that they were racists and they were trying to get rid of the superintendent because she was black. There was just a lot of bad media last year about University City schools and as a result, I think, a lot of white families have pulled their kids out of the public schools and, or have moved away, so University City would be, could end up having all black schools. It's possible, but as far as, you know, the desegregation effort, I think it's... I think it is the only hope temporarily, for having integration. I think, I think because the children will be going to schools all over suburban St. Louis county maybe they'll be comfortable with white people, you know, the black children may be comfortable with white people in a way that wouldn't have happened otherwise. And they may eventually, you know, some of these barriers may break down.

THOMAS: In the news this morning there was a ... a new group was formed, is formed, they reported this on the radio. A new group has formed to fight the funding portions of the desegregation plan. Why is it so difficult to get people to resign themselves to the change?

DREY: I guess there is just a lot of prejudice in our country, maybe all over and I am not surprised at that. I think that St. Louis county has a history

of, of segregation and prejudice, so I think any court would uphold, I mean half the courts have upheld this desegregation plan because, you know, there has been, there was an attempt to, to segregate black people, and I, you know, don't know what it's going to take to break down prejudice, you know. It's sort of a vicious circle because the black children in the city have had inferior education. You know their education's been inferior, crowded and so forth plus, you know, there has been a whole vicious circle of why I think black children have often done less well in school because... you know their parents didn't get good educations, don't have good jobs and there's not the same kind of, there aren't the same expectations made of the children and, you know, there's been a whole bunch of reasons I could talk about for a long time about why black kids do less well in school. So I think some, some white parents may have legitimate concerns that their, the quality of education is lower. I think the whole cost of this thing is huge. Just huge. Plus the fact that children have to be on the bus for such a long time. In fact I think that there are some legitimate concerns that the parents have.

THOMAS: I think in 1975 you wrote a letter to Eagleton, Thomas Eagleton, suggesting housing as an alternative to bussing - housing. Do you recall that?

DREY: No, but it's the kind of thing I would do. I wrote a wonderful letter to, I thought, to... I don't know whether you have it, but I wrote a letter to the judge in Washington who was so proud of himself for having decided that there should be bussing, that every community should have a certain percentage of... I don't know, that any integrated school district should have all its schools proportionally integrated. And I hated that decision because

it meant, for instance, it would demand bussing within University City, it would demand bussing within the city of St. Louis, but it would do nothing for the all white Parkway school districts of the United States. And I wrote a letter saying I think your decision was not good for the following reasons, and instead of sending it myself, I took it to the board of County Open Housing and I thought maybe it should come from County Open Housing. And they had all kinds of concerns, I guess, that sounded like they were the manipulative kinds of things I would have said that they were uncomfortable saying, so it never got written. And I still feel to this day, feel bad. It's happened to me before, you know, so I sort of... that's why I kind of now work more on my own, so that I can make my own mistakes and not have to worry about organizations.

THOMAS: And, well, by the time that you had resigned from the board of County Open Housing you were involved with the nuclear question thing.

DREY: Right, I'm still on the board of the University City Residential Service, but I really have not spent much time with that either.

THOMAS: The University City Residential Service as I recall, that was in existence before County Open Housing.

DREY: Yes, yes, in fact what happened was that it was established earlier than County Open Housing. And you know, as I said, it really was an effort to be a voice to white families saying you know this is a good community, you know, move in and be a part of it, and we were the only people saying that. You know, the banks were saying you don't want a loan in this community since it's going to be all black. You know you'll lose your money and so forth. Everywhere, the employers were saying that, the media was saying that, and so, but when I... I did establish the filing system at the University City

Residential Service and began keeping track of what housing was available both for sale and for rent and we ended up, you know, I personally wasn't very good working there and I ended up finding myself working with minority families who would come in and I'd say to them "Are you sure you know, are you just interested in University City or do you care or what?" And if the person said I don't particularly want to come to University City, you know, I am really more interested in living out near Western Electric where I work or whatever. Then I found myself being more comfortable working with minority people taking on white suburbia and the white real estate industry than I was working with white families. I just felt it was a much harder job and I was willing to do it so that's what happened.

THOMAS: The mechanics of what that kind of housing was trying to do worked out such that if a black family came to the University City Residential Service, that they were led to County Open Housing.

DREY: They were given... they were told there is housing elsewhere. If they, they do work with minority families also at UCRS, but they... if there... whenever there was a family not wedded to University City, you know, wasn't committed to University City, were... they would say are you interested in other areas, and if so, they would give them a referral from County Open Housing. That's where we mostly, I think we got a lot of families that way.

THOMAS: Then County Open Housing didn't contain any listings in University City?

DREY: No listings in U. City and no listings in Normandy and none in the city of St. Louis. None in Wellston.

THOMAS: OK, I think we've covered all the ground here unless there's anything you'd like to... Oh, then University City... County Open Housing of course, became Metro Housing after that, I don't know if you'd followed it. I think it eventually, probably the beginning of this year, funding had dried

up for it, and it no longer exists.

DREY: I didn't realize it lasted that long even. Where... was it still located over in ^{Demon}Demond?

THOMAS: I'm not quite sure. I don't know who's running it.

DREY: Yeah. I didn't realize it existed that long. I guess it was really just sort of Pete ^{Bernd}Burndt and, you know, ultimately he spoke the way I had spoken, you know, ultimately he was saying, you know, we gotta have housing all over and so forth, but you know, the business of taking on exclusionary zoning was something I felt was terribly important. I think County Open Housing was responsible for having kept a land use plan from being implemented by the St. Louis County Council, because we really exposed it for having it be a very exclusionary kind of a thing. They were going to have a swath of 3 acre lots and so forth in the central west part of St. Louis county and all, all the multi-family housing would be either far north or far south, you know, and it would have been the same.

THOMAS: And this was the land use plan that was... what year was that? There are some... we have maps and things, but do you recall the year?

DREY: No, I don't remember the year, but I think it would have just gone through, and we worked to expose it and I think that was...

THOMAS: My making statements to the press?

DREY: Right.

THOMAS: And testifying at hearings?

DREY: Right, by testifying at hearings and stuff. And I think so... whether... unless the government, you know the federal government. I remembered an old pamphlet put out by the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, I think this said the federal government builds ghettos and it's really

true, I mean the federal government, even when they passed the current housing act, they only helped families in section 8 housing, for instance, is in areas where the housing costs less, so it's usually in areas where there already are minority families living and you know, I understand that they don't want to pay \$600 a month for rent. You know. But on the other hand what it does is just accelerate resegregation by helping families who need subsidies move into areas where there's already white panic selling and so forth... so I used to... I think for a while I called my effort that I did on my own out of my own house before County Open Housing. I think I called it Block Busters, Inc.

THOMAS: Oh!

DREY: Cause I believe in block busting.

THOMAS: Oh, this was before...?

DREY: Before County Open Housing for a little while I just worked here, you know, directly with people who were willing to take on white suburbia.

THOMAS: Well, is there anything you'd like to add.

DREY: Well, you know, I've enjoyed this. I'm sorry my memory is, you know, it was a long time ago. Sorry I can't be more specific.

THOMAS: OK.

THE END